

**TO:** Superintendents, Principals, School Leaders, and Data Reporting Personnel  
**FROM:** Indiana Department of Education  
**DATE:** June 26, 2020  
**RE:** Guidance for Accurate Tracking of Student Attendance from the Beginning of the 2020-2021 School Year

Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, schools will be required to submit and certify their student-level attendance information to the State through Data Exchange. The daily student attendance data will be required by June 30, 2021 for certification of the data in the first week of July, 2021. Even though this data will not be submitted to the IDOE until the second half of the coming school year ***schools will need to maintain accurate attendance records for each student for each day of the school year from the start of school.*** These daily records will also need to reflect the new attendance codes ***Virtual*** and ***Virtual due to COVID***.

Schools should make sure to track daily student attendance accurately from the start of the 2020-2021 school year through the local Student Information System (SIS). The SIS will be used to submit all daily student attendance records for the 2020-2021 school year to the IDOE through the Data Exchange. Data Exchange will provide the following attendance codes to assist in reporting student attendance data more accurately.

- **In Attendance:** This code should be used when a student is considered “in attendance” at the physical school building, pursuant to the local attendance policy. This code should be used for non-virtual students. **(NEW)**
- **Virtual:** This code should be used when a student is considered “in attendance” at the virtual program or virtual school, pursuant to the local attendance policy. This code should be used for virtual students. **(NEW)**
- **Virtual Due to COVID-19:** This code should be used when a school must provide virtual instruction in lieu of in-person instruction due to COVID-19, and a student is considered “in attendance” pursuant to the local attendance policy. This code should be used for non-virtual students. **(NEW)**
- **Excused Absence:** This code should be used when a student is not “in attendance” and such absence is deemed “excused”, pursuant to the local attendance policy. This code should be used for both virtual and non-virtual students.
- **Unexcused Absence:** This code should be used when a student is not “in attendance” and such absence is deemed “not excused”, pursuant to the local attendance policy. This code should be used for both virtual and non-virtual students.
- **Exempt:** This code should be used when a student is not “in attendance” but is participating in one of the activities that is exempt by statute from consideration as an “absence”. This code should be used for both virtual and non-virtual students. **(NEW)**

- **Suspended:** This code should be used when a student has been suspended pursuant to the local discipline policy. This code should be used for both virtual and non-virtual students. **(NEW)**
- **Expelled:** This code should be used when a student has been expelled pursuant to the local discipline policy. This code should be used for both virtual and non-virtual students. **(NEW)**

When it is time to submit the daily student attendance data to the IDOE, each school's SIS will need to be able to produce a record per student per day with one of the eight attendance codes noted above listed for each day. Schools that do not have SIS systems with the ability to submit this data directly to the IDOE through the Data Exchange will need to utilize the attendance event template made available from IDOE (coming later this year). The template will require an attendance record for each instructional day for each student and will also include all attendance codes provided through Data Exchange.

Detailed guidance about submitting student attendance records for the 2020-2021 school year will be shared with data personnel through the normal channels. This high level information is being shared here because there are new attendance codes and because there is a new submission process. Please direct questions to <https://help.doe.in.gov/>.